28: Spiro--111-112
116, 153, 861, 626

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-1
Ifalik

"Social scientists have recently stressed the fact that imitation alone does not explain social and cultural learning, that such learning involves a system of rewards and punishments, the former serving to reinforce positive responses, and the latter serving to extinguish the wrong responses. On Ifaluk the punishments are quite definite and tangible, whereas the rewards are diffuse and mostly psychological in nature. In other words, rewards are seldom in the nature of 'Presents.' The simple cultural fact is that there is little possibility for the concept of 'present.' In a culture in which each family is an economic unit, almost entirely self-sufficient, each such family manufactures what every other family has so that there is no division of labor which results in exchange of goods. The child, therefore, cannot be offered something which the family does not already possess, and what it does possess are his for use anyway. Presents in the form of material goods would merely be an addition of something the child already has--some extra food, a larger basket, a new loin cloth--important, but not important enough so as to act as a dynamic agent in the learning process.

This leaves two other rewarding factors operating--praise and privilege. Privilege, too, is an unimportant factor, for again, given the cultural and geographical facts--the reality situation--there is little in the way of special privilege that the child can receive for good behavior. Any cultural goods the society has to offer are received automatically by the child as he matures. Such privileges as being able to listen to the

radio, to see the movie, to go for an automobile ride, etc. do not exist. Others, such as being able to stay up late at night, to go with his parents to a party or to the home of a relative are not special privileges. They are his as of right. No Ifaluk parent ever bribes his child, therefore, with the promise, that if you do such-and-such, I will permit you to do so-and-so. The pattern of reward and/or privilege following a meritorious deed is therefore, absent from this culture.

The only category remaining under reward is praise, and this is employed. The child who conforms to the social expectations, or who does something particularly meritorious, or who acquires a skill, is praised not only by his parents, but by all adults. The positive dynamics in learning, therefore, is the desire to be praised, the desire for the euphoria that accompanies the feeling of being accepted, the emotional security that comes from having pleased one's elders and merited their praise.

But this, apparently is not enough. There are negative sanctions that are even more important than the positive, though, to be sure, they may be viewed as the obverse side of the motivational coin. If one desires praise and security, one avoids blame, rejection, and ridicule. Ridicule and its resultant feeling of shame is probably the strongest factor operative in the Ifaluk learning pattern. There are, as we shall soon see, six specific punishments with which children are inflicted--almost all of which elicit shame and rejection responses rather than physical pain. Positively, then, it is the knowledge of being loved for doing the right thing--emotional security--that motivated good

behavior. Negatively, it is the feeling of being rejected, of not being loved--emotional insecurity--that soon eliminates bad behavior. 'If you do that', or 'if you no savvy that, you all same dog or pig' is the kind of ridicule that both shames the child and makes him aware of his implicity rejection by his parents. But this is not enough. There are six negative sanctions that are employed to punish the recalcitrant child, all of which, according to the children's confession, are distasteful, and should be avoided. These are being beaten,[112] spat upon, thrown in the lagoon, confined to the house, threatened with an alus, and scolded.

The child is beaten with a coconut-leaf, never with the naked hand. The actual physical pain involved, as I can testify, is slight. Being spat upon, of course, involves no physical pain at all. Being thrown into the ocean is not physically painful, though it might induce fear--fear of octopus or shark or an alus of the sea. There is no fear of drowning, since he is thrown in shallow water. Being scolded involves no physical pain, nor does being threatened with an alus, though the latter does elicit fear, for the alus, it will be remembered, causes illness. Confinement involves no physical pain, but is extremely frustrating. The children have complete mobility within their district, and being shut-in works a greater handicap on them than it would for an American child. It is the psychological experiencing of the punishment, as rejection, shame, frustration,

that is the dynamic force behind the punishments.

The following table is a statistical tabulation of the punishments reported by the children, giving the number of children who named any one punishment. Some named many, some none.

Table II

Number of subjects: 42
Male : 25
Female : 17

Punishment	No. of subj.	% of subj.	% of M.	% of F.
Beating	35	83	88	76
Spitting	22	52	56	47
Thrown in ocean	18	43	56	23
Confinement	18	43	44	41
Threatened with Alus	17	40	56	18
Scolding	14	33	24	47"

"The next table expresses statistically, the severity of the punishment, as experienced by the child. That is, I asked each child which punishment he disliked the most. The number of children included in this table is not the entire child population, as are the first two. Some children said that none were experienced as severe. Others said that all were equally severe. And some I neglected to ask.

Table III

Number of subjects: 24
Male : 17
Female : 7

Punishment	No. of subjects	% of subjects	M%	F%
Beating	10	41	41	43
Confinement	5	20	23	14
Spitting	4	17	6	41
Ocean	3	12	17	0
Alus	2	8	11	0
Scolding	0	0	0	0

[113] The small number of female subjects permits no interpretive results to be drawn from the differential sexual responses."

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958
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Ifaluk

sions were put in bags or boxes of various sorts and slung by ropes from the rafters, the whole upper part of the house thus being a sort of floorless attic.

The citizens of Ifaluk cooperated nicely in the census operation, though they seemed rather amused at such strange antics. Those who had been weighed and measured loved to stand around and watch the rest as they passed through the routine. It was hard to get some of the people, especially the women, to stand up straight enough for a proper height measurement. They had, in many cases, what seemed to be a permanent crouch, perhaps resulting from the low doorways and interiors, perhaps the product of a sort of chronic deference, since the women of Ifaluk knew their place—always bowing respectfully in the presence of the male animal. (Ted suspected that this show was superficial and that the women, there as everywhere, knew their power and how to use it; one of the five chiefs, it turned out, was a woman.)

There were no ideas of modesty associated with the breasts; and the ladies didn't seem to be bothered by the fact that their skirts gaped rather badly near the belt-line behind. But they were very modest about legs from the knee up and were careful never to expose an inch of thigh. Their preoccupation with keeping their skirts close about their legs was clear enough as they stepped on the scales. Don, impressed by their modest maneuvers as he tried to read the dial on the scales, remarked that they would really be shocked by an American bathing suit.

The people seemed to take wonderful care of the children, the men holding babies and comforting the young as often as the women. Ted and his colleague, Spiro, in their 1948 study, found that the kids were never spanked, and rarely yelled at—though it was said that they sometimes doused them in the lagoon if they got too obstreperous. At the movies on the NETTLE Don noticed one man gently ladling sea water on a bawling baby. The baby stopped crying quickly—and he made a mental note to try this on his own daughter when he got back home.

The smallest infants were in cradles. These were square boxes with low sides, fastened by a bridle of cords from the corners, and suspended a few inches above the floor by a rope from the rafters. The babies were tucked in with some old clothes, and seemed contented enough.